for stringent punishments to those committing atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The Prime Minister convened a Conference of Chief Ministers in the first week of Oct., 1991 for taking effective steps to prevent atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The decisions taken in the Conference have been communicated to the States and U.Ts. for follow-up action.

A Conference of State Ministers in charge of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare and Development was also convened on 21st March, 1992 to review, among other things, the effective implementation of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

Special Courts for SC/ST people

4361. SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) The number of States which have established Special Courts for trying cases of atrocities on SC/ST people; and

(b) the number of cases pending before them?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) All the State Governments and U.T. Administrations, except Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland, have specified Special Courts for the trial of offences under the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

The State Governments of Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have set up six and three exclusive special Courts respectively.

The Act does not extend to Jammu & Kashmir.

(b) The information is being collective from the State Govts. and U.T. Administrations and will be laid on the table of the House.

Liquior shops on highways

4362. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of Welfare be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in accordance with a 12-point programme drawn up in 1975 in regard to sale of Liquor as well as guidelines issued to State Governments during 1978, Liquor shops are not to be allowed on highways;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is mushroom growth of these sale points working day and night on the highways in Andhra Pradesh, thereby inducing vehicle drivers to consume liquor and arrack, resulting in highrate of accidents; and

(c) the steps Government have taken/propose to take to prevent the menace?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Caste certificate

4363. SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of verification of caste certificates by office of District Magistrates of Bihar during last five years stating that no record is available or the certificate has not been issued by that office; and

(b) the number of cases in which caste/tribe certificates have been issued in Bihar by District Welfare Officer and whether District Welfare Officer was authorised for any period to issue caste certificates, if so, the details of the period and if not what arrangement has been made by Government to regularise such certificates?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected from the Government of Bihar and will be laid on Table of the House.